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## Editors' Note

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# EDITORS' NOTE


Recently, scientists predicted that if fishing continues at its current rate there could be a global collapse of all species currently fished by the middle of the century.<sup>1</sup> This dire prediction was coupled with a glimmer of hope—the current trend is still reversible.<sup>2</sup>

Disregarding the steady stream of new science demonstrating that our oceans are in trouble appears to be the trend of many governments and policy makers. However, ignorance is no longer an excuse and time is running out to repair our marine resources. While we can argue about what percent of fish stocks are being overfished and when the collapse of global fisheries may actually occur, the bottom-line is that marine resources are at risk and require intervention.

To reverse this catastrophic trend a number of legal and policy solutions must be implemented. Specifically, illegal fishing needs to be curtailed, marine pollution needs to be reduced, destructive fishing practices must be stopped, protection should be afforded to deep sea living resources, the high seas must cease being a global commons, and an effective regime for the conservation and management of international fish stocks needs to be created. Of utmost importance, compliance and enforcement must take center stage when exploring mechanisms to protect marine resources.

Countries have recognized these responsibilities through the creation of domestic regulations, as well as numerous regional and multinational agreements. The impact and effectiveness of these agreements has varied. For example, not enough has been done to protect straddling fish stocks. It is clear that developing new solutions for the gaps within the regulation of our oceans is required, and the utilization of international law is vital to meeting these challenges.

Education to prevent a catastrophic future of our marine resources is essential. Countries must make ocean conservation a priority and the public must understand the potential consequences if this does not properly occur. We hope that this issue of *Sustainable Development Law & Policy* contributes to this effort.



Kelly Rain



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EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

<sup>1</sup> Boris Worm, et al., *Impacts of Biodiversity Loss on Ocean Ecosystem Services*, Science, Nov. 3, 2006, at 787–790, available at <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/314/5800/787> (last visited Nov. 5, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Worm, *id.*

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